

Red Ribbon Week is October 23-31

Red Ribbon Week is an ideal way for schools and communities to take a stand against drugs. The mission of the Red Ribbon campaign is to present a unified and visible commitment towards the creation of a drug-free America. To view the Red Ribbon Planning Guide, visit:

<http://www.informedfamilies.org/RedRibbonGuide07.pdf>

Arts Commission awards \$1.2 million in grants to support arts in SC schools

The South Carolina Arts Commission has awarded more than \$1.2 million in grants during its first round of fiscal 2008 funding to help support the arts in schools across the state. To read more, visit:

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/news/more.cfm?articleID=852>

Message from Jim Rex

Dear Friend:

"Since so much of a child's intellectual capacity and ability is formulated within the first four to six years of life...the overlay of poverty on the very young appears to create a template for poor academic achievement and intellectual ability that is very difficult to break. That is why it is essential to address the impact of poverty as early as possible in the lives of the children affected by it."

Judge Thomas Cooper issued these words in the December 2005 Abbeville v. South Carolina ruling. That case sought to remedy long-standing inequitable and inadequate funding of public education in our state.

We know that providing high quality early childhood opportunities gives us the most return for our investment when it comes to educating the students of the Palmetto State. In fact, I am proud of what we are accomplishing in the area of early childhood education. One excellent example is the South Carolina Child Development Education Pilot Program (CDEPP) which serves South Carolina's at-risk population. This is a promising initiative that partners the South Carolina Department of Education to oversee participating public school district programs and South Carolina First Steps to oversee private and other non-district community-based providers.

As we conclude the second year of CDEPP implementation, policymakers will have to make decisions regarding funding for continuation and expansion of our 4-K programs. The challenge will be to capitalize on the substantial

progress that has been made in building a strong foundation for improved learning producing better outcomes in academic achievement, economic productivity, and successful life for our youngest generation.

Through our recent reorganization of the SCDE, we have paired our early childhood staff with educators in elementary, middle, and high school to provide a clearly articulated, seamless education for all students. Our efforts to address early childhood from 4-K to third grade will increase in the months ahead so that we can fully implement the ruling from Judge Cooper.

I believe it's important that we remain focused at the South Carolina Department of Education on providing expanded four-year-old opportunities and other early childhood and parenting initiatives for South Carolina's children and parents while we continue to do all we can to support the efforts of First Steps as it seeks to make a difference for our younger children. I know that together, we can improve the lives of children and families through our ongoing collaboration and make a difference for our state and our future.

Sincerely,

Jim Rex
State Superintendent of Education

To read more about the CDEPP, visit:

<http://ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/ece/ChildDevelopmentEducationPilotProgram.html>

Rex on The Road:

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/superintendent/Rex-on-The-Road-Schedule.html>

In The News:

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/news/>

On The Air:

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/publicinformation/On-The-Air.html>

Dates to Remember:

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/publicinformation/Dates-to-Remember.html>

Resources for Teachers:

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/publicinformation/Resources-for-Teachers.html>

Resources for Students:

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/publicinformation/Resources-for-Students.html>

Resources for Administrators:

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/publicinformation/Resources-for-School-Administrators.html>

What Others Are Saying:

<http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/offices/publicinformation/Education-RelatedEditorialOpinion.html>

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